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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/27/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [PHUM](#) [EG](#) [KDEM](#) [ECON](#) [PARM](#) [XA](#)
SUBJECT: U.S.-EGYPTIAN STRATEGIC DIALOGUE: NEXT STEPS

REF: CAIRO 1520

11. (U) Classified by: NEA Acting A/S Ronald Schlicher. E.O. 12958, Reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d).

12. (C) SUMMARY. The structure of the Strategic Dialogue provides a framework within which to highlight and address major areas of bilateral, regional, and multilateral coordination with the Government of Egypt (GOE). Following up on U/S Burns's meetings in June in Cairo, the Department would like to propose a series of bilateral discussions with the GOE under the umbrella of the Strategic Dialogue focusing on the following issues: nonproliferation; the UN Human Rights Council; Africa; human rights and governance; economic issues; and assistance. These meetings will set the stage for the next plenary session of the strategic dialogue (led by U/S Burns and MFA Deputy Foreign Minister Wafaa Bassim), which we propose take place in Washington December 16. END SUMMARY.

NEXT STEPS

13. (C) Department requests that post convey to the GOE the United States' desire to maintain momentum in our Strategic Dialogue (SD) with Egypt and propose the following based on the thematic structure agreed to between our governments in June 2009.

14. (SBU) U/S Burns is prepared to host the next SD senior-level meeting in Washington on December 16.

AFRICA

15. (C) The most recent meeting on regional issues within the context of the Strategic Dialogue was on African issues on October 26, when A/S Johnnie Carson traveled to Cairo. Agenda items included Somalia, Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, piracy off the coast of Somalia, and Nile Basin/water issues.

NON-PROLIFERATION

16. (C) The Department recommends that we convene as soon as possible a high-level meeting on nuclear non-proliferation issues. The outcome from the September International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference (GC) was mixed, but in follow-on meetings both in Washington and in Cairo, FM Aboul Gheit, Ambassador Shoukry, and Deputy Assistant Minister for Disarmament Khalid Shamma emphasized the need for continued engagement on these issues. Continuous engagement with Egypt on nuclear issues in the lead-up to the May 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference (NPT RevCon) will be critical in preventing a few contentious Middle East issues from undermining the entire NPT RevCon. U/S Tauscher and Special Representative for

Nuclear-Nonproliferation Burk will participate in this engagement. Bilateral exchanges could lay the foundation for trilateral exchanges with Egypt and Israel in the spirit of the negotiations regarding the Middle East Safeguards Resolution held during the 2009 IAEA GC. These exchanges can take the form of phone communications with Cairo and meetings in both Washington and Cairo. U/S Tauscher plans to be in Cairo at the beginning of December.

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

¶17. (C) Building on the successful cooperation between Egypt and the United States on the Freedom of Expression resolution, the Department also proposes working with Egypt to address the underlying concerns driving the "Defamation of Religions" resolution. Important issues to address include the issues of religious intolerance and discrimination, and negative religious stereotyping. IO/HR's Director Atul Keshap led the discussions on Freedom of Expression and would be best placed to continue working with his counterparts on the "Defamation of Religions" issue, with IO Front Office and DRL Front Office participation as appropriate. Proposed date and location: December 2009, Cairo.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOVERNANCE

¶18. (C) The Department proposes holding a government-to-government discussion on human rights and governance chaired by DRL Assistant Secretary Michael Posner in Cairo in the near future. This discussion would consist of a detailed bilateral exchange focusing on democracy, governance, human rights, and civil society, and would follow up on discussions held with GOE officials on these issues since the Obama Administration came into office. Reftel enumerates the areas where we believe we can engage with the GOE to encourage action. (Note: This meeting could precede the convening of a meeting between Egyptian and American civil society organizations under the umbrella of the Strategic Dialogue. End Note.) Ambassador-at-Large Luis CdeBaca, from the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, will visit Egypt from November 12 to 15 to discuss Egypt's efforts to address human trafficking.

ECONOMICS AND TRADE

¶19. (C) In recognition of the GOE's increased interest in engaging the USG on a wide range of bilateral trade, commercial, and economic issues, EEB is considering an A/S-level economic dialogue with the MFA as a strategic dialogue component. MFA Assistant Minister for Economic Affairs visited Washington recently and met with EEB Acting DAS Bill Craft. EEB's A/S, once confirmed, will consider following up on this visit by traveling to Cairo in the first half of 2010. In addition, the WEF annual meeting in Davos (January 27-31, 2010) and the WEF on the Middle East and North Africa in Marrakesh, Morocco, (October 21-22, 2010) offer opportunities for discussions on the margins of those meetings.

ASSISTANCE

¶10. (C) The Department recommends that as part of ongoing discussions over ESF, Minister of Cooperation Aboul Naga consider travel to Washington for high-level discussions with Deputy Secretary Lew. The exact timing of such a visit would depend on the timing of USG decisions regarding the future of the ESF program.

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